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**LOGOS  
AS ONTOLOGICAL PRINCIPLE OF REALITY**

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## LOGOS AS ONTOLOGICAL PRINCIPLE OF REALITY

The world presents itself as a *nexus* of closely interrelated constituents; it is given as a *whole-of-parts*.

Ontological inner interconnectedness is grounded in causality: things have a cause of being, a reason of existence. The *datum* of beingness involves an inherent pointer towards its *explanation*. Existence is not only revealed as a *fact*, but is also illuminated (*in rerum natura*) by the account of its availability and obtaining. Why-ness is intrinsically operative in the that-ness of Being. In the very reality of the effect is in-written the working of its cause, the reason of its being.

The cosmic content is not only articulated into a systematic interconnection; it is further *integrated* into a whole. The integration presupposes a single ultimate principle or a definite combination of principles at the beginning of things; a common origin of all reality. In the case of a combination it must be shown to be intrinsically necessary if the wholeness of the world is to be securely safeguarded. In one way or another, all existence has the same ultimate explanation.

The cause of a being is its reason of existence: *this explanation is its illumination*. The cause *comprehends* its effect; the latter is *understood* by means of the former. The *reason* of being is also the (ontological) *understanding* of being: A thing is adequately known, when the explanation of its existence is fully revealed. Primarily, *it is the cause that knows its results*. Understanding is *conceived in being*. When existence remains dark and opaque, its *secret* is kept undiscovered. The *mystery* of factuality is revealed when being is *accounted for*, when the *reason* for its actuality is given; then existence becomes transparent and luminous: it is

*comprehended* by its cause. The cause of being is the *reason of its existence* and the *reason of its understanding* simultaneously: the objective light of Being is intellection.

The ultimate principle of the *world is*, therefore, the universal cosmic *Intelligence. Truth*, consequently, *is an ontological property*. The truth of being is its essence *qua* revealing the *ground* of its existence. Man possesses the truth of things if he has established the right ontological connection with the principle of things (when his soul is, for example, dry in case that fire is the ultimate reality). In a sense, to know something is to be able to produce it, at least to reconstitute it ideally from first principles. Divine Intelligence knows what it actually generates; human mind understands what is explicable by first principles.

The ultimate *Reason* of things is, thus, the first principle of *Being*. What produces, dominates, reaches, permeates and controls every entity in the world is the universal Intelligence (Νόησις) of Being (Air, e.g., according to Diogenes of Apollonia). The most pervasive aetherial substance *grasps* and *contains* everything: it is the *conceiving* principle. In this sense already the *principle of being is the Mind and Reason of the world* (normally the περιέχον according to the archaic mentality). This, and no other, is the foundation of Greek *Geistmetaphysik* : spirit and mind, intellection and understanding, are objective determinations of reality, and no inherent patrimony of an alien *subjective* principle.

However, a stonger and stricter meaning is elicited once the nature itself of the principle of being is investigated.

Reality exhibits *lawfulness* in its structures and processes. The observance of evident lawfulness points to the working of hidden lawfulness in cases when man is incapable of penetrating the mystery of the real. Lawfulness is the primal revelation of the secret of existence: it implies *regularity*. Regularity again proceeds from *order*. Order, further, is fundamentally established when there obtains a harmonious blending of components, a balanced equilibrium of potencies, a proportionate extension of operations. Thus at the bottom of all lawfulness lies *harmony*; it is harmony that binds together the world-parts in a unified whole and thus effects the *integration* of existence occurring in the cosmic field. That harmony, manifest or veiled, constitutes the universal fabric of reality in its lawfulness and ontological cohesion is a profound archaic experience.

The existence of the world-order is grounded in cosmic harmony; the awakening of intellectual understanding is also grounded in cosmic harmony. Harmony, as the light and transparency of being, constitutes both the inner *nexus* of reality and its external radiance, the *elucidation* of reality. *Noeticity is an objective attribute of being*.

A harmonious state is a state of equilibrium. True harmony is never static: in fact genuine staticity is an impossibility in reality. A purely static state would

automatically collapse, and the edifice defined thereby would crumble down. Being is kept together dynamically; otherwise it would disintegrate into nothingness. Beingness is essentially *tensional*. Harmony, correspondingly, is a *balance of tensions*.

Disorder is always *local* and limited in time; it consists in the prevalence of one tendency, in the predominance of one factor out of many real and valid. Such ontological one-sidedness is always locally and temporally circumscribed in its particularity. It is submerged in a higher order constituting a power field more extended in space and within a broader time-interval. The *integral of change is stable* over bigger areas. The river is always flowing and never the same at any particular cross-section or segment of it; but as a whole it is an identical entity with definite properties persevering in time.

Not only are local anomalies integrated into larger regional *homalies*; even the very disharmony in its particular character is the outward appearance of a *deeper* lying harmony. Disharmony consists in tensional unbalance, in prevalence of one tensional movement over its opposite. For *tension is intrinsically bipolar*: the elementary tensional situation is contrariety over a continuum. Now, concentration of tensional energy in one direction constitutes the power to act forcefully in the *opposite* direction, as the bow and the lyre illustrate. Harmony is thus *παλίντονος*, it is founded on *reverse tensionality*. Tensional unbalance is *not* a violation of the law of harmony: it is its rigourest application and proof. Disharmony apparent is deeper harmony. In fact, *intensification of seeming anomaly enhances the potency of the underlying harmony*: the more the string is stretched, the stronger its force becomes, the greater its effects will be. Indeed ἁρμονία ἀφανῆς φανερῆς κρείσσων; harmony is fundamentally dynamic and tensional. The *intensity of Being* consists in an apparent sharp unbalance which manifests a secret deep harmony. A thing achieves mightily its purpose when its defining harmony is stretched to the extreme limits; the more its tension is unbalanced, the more it becomes itself, consolidates its essence, enhances its power and heightens its activity: οὐ ξυνιάσι ὄκως διαφερόμενον ἑωυτῷ συμφέρεται παλίντονος ἁρμονίη ὄκωσπερ τόξου καὶ λύρης.

Accumulation of tensional energy on one side creates the drive towards the opposite side. *Harmony is thus self-sustainable*: it is the intrinsic law of reality and not an axiological requirement externally superimposed on the factuality of Being by outside *fiat*. The general form of the law of cosmic harmony is precisely this: *that any disruption of balance necessarily leads eventually to the opposite disruption*. It is the Anaximandrian law in Heraclitean formulation: what exists lives on the death of that out of which it is generated; what perishes dies for the life of that which comes to be out of it. But here it is generalized in terms of the basic parameter of reality: the tension of Being.

Each entity in reality has its essence constituted by a certain *tonality* in universal harmony. This tonality consists itself in a given tension of Being; just as well it admits a tensional variation in *intensity*: the musical parallelism is clarifying. Both tonality and intensity are *tensions*, the former *essential*, the latter *perfectional*. The two are homogeneous: there is a continuous gradation *via essence to perfection from initia and origins*. Heracleitean ontological harmonics is more flexible than the Pythagorean: it is significant that the former was never mathematicized in the way of classical and Academic Pythagoreanism. On the other hand, of course, harmony implied determinations, limit, finitude. Yet *tension* and *substrate* (material substance) represent a different expression of the πέρας - ἄπειρον Pythagorean Dualism: an expression that led eventually to Stoicism.

However, if tension and substrate are conceptually distinguishable, they are *realiter* inseparable. Form is not distinct from matter, except in bare thought, through mere abstraction. The law of harmony is implicit in the primal substance of the world; the world is πῦρ αἰείζων ἀπτόμενον μέτρα καὶ σβεννύμενον μέτρα. *Harmony is the inherent measure of fiery life*. Extinction of a part of fire means generation of other substances constituted upon a different tensional tonality of Being; this other tension eventually will lead to the kindling of the same portion of fire in accordance with the everlasting law of harmony as tensional bipolarity and *reversion* (παλιντονία). The same lawfulness is observed in each subsequent *transformation of reality*, from the most thorough elemental mutations to the slightest particular alterations.

This universality of the law of harmony renders reality *translucent in detail*. It is not only that there is a reason of Being in general, an explanation of the fact of cosmic existence: this is given by the presupposition of a first Principle of reality, or of a necessary combination of first Principles. It is not further in addition that there is a specific reason for each particular existence in the world, a specific reason determined in its general form: this is given once the law of derivation of Being from first Principles is defined. It is primarily the nature of this law of derivation, and the character of the corresponding law of cosmic structure and constitution which thoroughly enlightens the world. The first Principle *comprehends* collectively the entirety of existence: it explains it and *conceives* it. But when the first Principle is the source of *harmony* constituting the cosmic fabric in its specificity, then the explanation can be put in the form of a *symbolical or mathematical equation*: the account of Being, its causal origination, amounts to a definite *ratio*, it is grounded in *proportion*, it establishes a determinate *relationship*, it is therefore a λόγος in all senses of the word. The *comprehension* becomes *analytic* in detail, it is *spun out*, it is an *ontological proposition and inference*. The *immediate grasp of reality* is supplemented, if not substituted, by its *combinational resolution*. Thus, the Λόγος doctrine of reality was necessarily propounded in the context of a harmonic analysis

of existence (which did not have to be basically mathematical in the strict sense).

Herein lies the significance of the difference between a Logos-principle from a Mind-principle. The pervasive, grasping and containing intellectual faculty finds its physical reality in *Spirit* and *Ur-Air*; while harmonic internal structuring, affiliated to the measured action of living *Fire*, led to the emergence of the Logos-doctrine. Already in the philosophical commentary of the Derveni Papyrus there occurs an important combination of the twin tendencies.

Fire as the principle of harmony is universal Λόγος. Transformed fire as the principle of specific harmony is the particular λόγος of a particular thing, the *reason* of its essence. Fire, Logos and Harmony coalesce; they are three aspects of the same reality. New mathematical objects and relations, especially proportions, can be generated by appropriate operations on given objects and relations. New logical connections can be established from certain other connections in chains of inference and argumentation. Transformations of Fire create the entire cosmic variegation. What is produced is eventually resolved into that out of which it proceeded. Mathematical structures and logical articulations correspond to the integrals of reality, to the very *organicity* of Being. Λόγος is the *principle of existence*.

Harmony and coherence are the quintessential characteristics of Logos. *In fact coherence is just harmony*. Inharmonious coherence is an unreal human artificiality. The harmony is not purely mathematical, nor is the coherence merely logical and mechanical. Or, in equivalent alternative formulation, the mathematics and mechanisms involved are organic. The harmonies are subtle, *aethereal*, as in ancient art, forceful simultaneously, with high resonances; they are self-varying and self-adjusting, they are *living*; they are precise in each case, yet not rigidly uniform in general. Similarly, logic is not a mathematical calculus of conceptions, but the operative form of reality. Logos, principle of harmony and coherence, is a *living force*. It conceives, and brings forth, specific λόγος as in organic generation.

Measured transformations of *Fire* as ultimate reality constitute the world-fabric. Harmonic adjustments of *tension* constitute the cosmic whole. Logical articulations of, and within, universal Logos generate the entire complexity of reality. Three aspects of the same thing which manifest the underlying intrinsic connection between the harmonic theory of existence and the Logos doctrine of Being, with Fire, the most drastic and supple substance, as ultimate reality.

Logos *unfolds* itself in definite *order* determining in its course all particular logoi in their varying specificity. Every singular logos is *spun* also *out*, like a developing cluster of properties around given mathematical objects. Just as the theorems relating to triangularity are already involved in the concept of the triangle, and the consequences of an idea follow necessarily from it as explicit determinations implicitly included in its identity, so organic developments elicit in measured progress

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what is condensedly contained in the organic seed. Logos as principle of reality is thus discovered to be *spermatic*. Physical, mathematical and biological features coalesce in the reason of Being.

Logos as aethereal fire provides the material substance of the world in its totality, of all things in the universal whole. Logos as harmonic determination constitutes the form and essence of Being. Logos as living, spermatic force sets the entire cosmic evolution in motion. In Logos there is initially combined simultaneously *formal, material and efficient causality*.

*Final causality* is also inherent. For the ancient world-experience, a natural law has always a point, bears a meaningful significance; it effects an immediate and subserves an ulterior purpose. This awareness of intrinsic finality in cosmic processes finds its natural expression in Being-harmonics. Harmony constitutes both the essence and the perfection, the existence as well as the intensity of Being. Existence is fundamentally *directed*; the *reason* of Being is primarily its *end*: form is such a constitution as subserves the natural end; while efficient cause is the *tensional* prefiguration of the end, its dynamic, spermatic condensation.

Objective Logos emerged thus fully *creative*, but operating within the context of an *immanent* causality. With the gradual weakening of the archaic stress on hylozoism, or on the physical foundation of all reality (and the accompanying religious this-worldliness of such an emphasis), Being tends to be bifurcated into material substrate and essential form in such a way that renders the latter *also self-subsistent* after a fashion. The drive behind this sublimation of the formal aspect of being lies in the demand for *absoluteness; essential perfection*, according to this world-experience, has to be absolutely *realized*, above and beyond its impeded, defective, unstable and short-lived natural manifestation in the world of flux. Thus is established the *ideality* of Being as a *higher-order reality*. And with it Logos became *transcendent*. Three general types of theory then developed to account for the formation of the sensible world depending on whether material substance was considered to be created *ex nihilo*, to proceed by hypostatic degradation from the superior realm, or to subsist independently in a particular dual system of principles of reality.

In whatever way the relationship and dependence of reality on the ideal will have to be analysed, the two strata of reality divide the universal Logos into two separate entities: the common logos of nature on the one hand, and the creative archetypal Logos on the other, the immanent and transcendent principles of the sensible cosmos, the former being the image of the latter.

But in transcendent ideality, the logical requirements of Being, operating in abstraction from their this-worldly manifested formations, push to the ultimate un presupposing presupposition, the absolute ἀνυπόθετον. Creative Logos is the principle of organic harmonious coherence; as such, it involves even on the plane of

ideality, the principle of *variation*. Differentiation proposed *otherness*. Then transcendent Logos cannot be an ultimate reality. *The absolute must be absolutely simple*; for complexity implies otherness, and this, in its turn, distinction and relation, which contradict absoluteness. The genuine absolute does not enter into any relation with anything, not with the relative. Logos, on the other hand, bears relation to its logoi-parts. The absolute, therefore, cannot be in particular creative, strictly speaking. It is not even a principle, since a principle is related to that of which it is a principle. *It is thus beyond causality.*

Above transcendent, creative Logos, and *not* above, is therefore the Absolute, the hiddenness of existence, beyond existence, wrapped in the mystery of nothingness, of the only identity without an otherness. Reason cannot describe it but by *contradictions*, since Reason *is* the principle of coherence, and it is not the Absolute. The *via eminentiae* can be also figuratively employed, as when the Absolute is called the One.

*The Absolute is the (superior) darkness of Being, as Logos is the Light of Being.* Logos disclosed the secret of existence. Logos is the radiance of the Absolute, just as existence is the effervescence of absolute Nothingness. Here, as in a multi-dynamic focus, there meet manifold power fields. Diverse theories revolve round this point, some keeping to the basic pattern, others complicating the series of procession, derivation or ontological dependence. Thus with emphasis on the absolute ineffability of the first Principle, which is really neither First nor Principle (as it does not fall under any ordinance or relation whatsoever), a Damascian type of theory is highlighted, answering to certain Gnostic predilections. One-ness as ground of existence represents the Neoplatonic mainstream rooted in firm Platonic soil. *In-itself-ness* of the First God and reference or turning down to matter of the Second One (which constitutes his creativity) characterizes Numenius' position. Beingness absolutely taken, preceding eidetic differentiation and systematically self-dividing potency of Reason, tends in the Philonian direction. While the unity of Mind over and above the ratiocinative analyticity of Reason points towards the broad spectrum of Middle Platonism. Other and further elaborations can be put adequately into place, once the basic line of transition from Logos as *immanent first principle* to Logos as *transcendent first Principle*, and hence to Logos as *transcendent, second, derivative principle*, is properly understood in its inner nature.